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**AFRICAN VEGETATION.**

SKETCH OF LIVINGSTONE'S LIFE.

David Livingstone was born at Blantyre, near Glasgow, in 1813, of humble parents, whose simple piety and worth were however noticeable even in a community which, in those days, ranked above the average for all those manly and self-denying virtues which a few generations ago were characteristic of the lower classes of Scotland.

At the time of his birth his father was a small grocer in Blantyre, and, as Livingstone himself says, "though too conscientious ever to grow rich as a small tea dealer, yet by his winning ways he made the heartstrings of his children twine around him as firmly as if he could have bestowed upon them every worldly advantage."

At ten years old, young David was sent to the cotton mills as a *piecer*, where he was employed from six in the morning till eight at night, with intervals for breakfast and dinner. These close hours did not prevent him in his endeavors to alter his circumstances, for with a portion of his first week's wages he purchased a Latin Grammar, and by the age of 16 had, simply during the intervals for meals and a short time each night, read many of the classical authors. It was by this means that the young *piecer* bore and conquered the cruel circumstances of his boyhood, and made for himself a name, which is known and respected throughout the civilized world, and is accepted by the savage inhabitants of Central Africa as conveying to their minds all that is best in the character of "the white man."

His reading in the factory was carried on by placing the book on a portion of the spinning jenny, so that he could catch sentence after sentence as he passed at his work. Notwithstanding the limited leisure at his disposal, he made himself thoroughly acquainted with the scenery, botany, and geology of the surrounding district.

When 19 years of age, Livingstone was promoted to be a cotton spinner, and while the heavy toil pressed hard upon the poor lad, he was cheered by the reflection that the wages he now earned during the summer months would enable him to support himself in Glasgow during the winter, while attending medical and other classes in Glasgow University, to reach which he walked daily to and from his father's house, a distance of 9 miles.

Upon completing his medical curriculum, he had hoped to be sent to China, but as the opium war was then raging this was deemed inexpedient, so he was induced to direct his steps to South Africa, and, after spending two years of close training, was sent out, in 1840, by the "London Missionary Society." The next sixteen years, 1840-56, he spent in missionary and medical labours in Africa, often having to endure the most severe hardships, and run great dangers, both from the unfriendly natives and the wild animals.

Livingstone gives this pleasing picture of his first

station in Africa. "This station is about 700 miles from Cape Town, and has been established nearly 30 years by Hamilton and Moffat. The missionary houses and church are built of stone. The gardens, irrigated by a rivulet, are well stocked with fruit-trees and vines, and yield European vegetables and grain readily. The pleasantness of the place is enhanced by the contrast it presents to the surrounding scenery, and the fact that it owes all its beauty to the manual labour of the missionaries. Externally it presents a picture of civilized comfort to the adjacent tribes; and the printing press, worked by the original founders of the mission, gradually diffuses the

light of Christianity through the neighbouring region."

But space will not allow us to go closely into Livingstone's life. The two most important results achieved by him in this period were the discovery of Lake Ngami (August 1, 1849) and his crossing the continent of South Africa, from Zambesi to the Congo, and thence to Loando, the capital of Angola, which took him about eighteen months (January, 1853, to June, 1854). During the following winter he retraced his steps, and in May, 1856, took ship for England, where he was received with great honour, and where he remained till 1858. Returning then, he visited the Zambesi, and spent several years in exploring that region. A narrative of the discoveries made at this time was published during a visit he paid to England, 1864-65. With a view to a solution of the problem of the true source of the Nile, Livingstone entered the heart of Africa again in 1866, and nothing was heard of him for several years. He was baffled by inundations, the hostility of slave dealers, and by the want



of supplies, which, though forwarded from Zanzibar, were habitually delayed and plundered by those who conveyed them. Still he continued his search undaunted. Little was heard of him until, in 1872, Mr. H. M. Stanley, Commissioner of the *N. Y. Herald*, boldly pushed his way from Zanzibar to Ujiji, where he found the traveller in great destitution.

What the result of his exploration was, since Mr. Stanley left him, we do not at present know. His records, kept by him with his diary, will shortly be issued from the press.

The last days of this great man are well known. When every eye was looking, expecting to see him return in health, a despatch came from the Consul at Zanzibar with the news of his death. Far from civilized habitation, amongst the natives for whom he had worked so long, Dr. Livingstone succumbed to an attack of dysentery, which carried him off after an illness of ten days. His men embalmed the corpse as well as they were able, and brought it to Zanzibar. From thence, properly preserved, the remains were conveyed to London, where they were received with all honour, from the most learned men of England and Scotland. A simple inscription marks the spot of his death in Africa, while his body reposes in Westminster Abbey, where, on the 18th April, 1874, it was laid, in the sight of thousands of spectators. The coffin was covered by wreaths and *immortelles*, one placed there by the hand of her Majesty.

Thus rose, and thus passed away, one of the greatest travellers, missionaries, and philanthropists, and withal one of the simplest and most single-hearted men England has ever seen.